

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 25325

DEPARTMENT PASS COMMERCE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, FR

SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON PIERRE BROUSSE, NEWLY-
NAMED MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND HANDICRAFTS

REF: PARIS 15052

1. BORN 30/11/26T LIMOGES IN THE SOUTHWEST OF FRANCE,
BROUSSE COMPLETED HIS HIGHER STUDIES AT THE INSTITUTE OF
POLITICAL STUDIES IN PARIS. ALREADY IN 1948 HE WAS
PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENT RADICAL PARTY ASSOCIATION,
BECOMING IN 1955 BOTH PRESIDENT OF THE YOUNG RADICAL
SOCIALISTS AND A MEMBER OF THE PARTY POLITICAL BUREAU.
FROM 1960 TO 1969 HE WAS PRESIDENT OF THE RADICAL SOCIA-
LIST PARTY, TO WHICH POSITION HE WAS SUCCEDED BY JEAN-
JACQUES SERVAN-SCHREIBER. TWO YEARS LATER, IN 1971, HE
FOLLOWED THAT FACTION OF THE PARTY WHICH, DISPLEASED
WITH THE PRESIDENCY OF JJSS, SWITCHED TO THE UNION OF
THE LEFT IN THE OPPOSITION. CONCURRENTLY WITH HIS CAREER
IN THE PARTY, BROUSSE HAS BEEN SENATOR FROM THE HERAULT
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SINCE 1968 AND MAYOR OF BEZIERS, A TOWN OF APPROXIMATELY

80,000 NEAR MONTPELLIER IN THE SOUTH, SINCE 1947. HE IS ALSO AN HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE LIBERAL MOVEMENT FOR A UNIFIED EUROPE. HE IS MARRIED, DOES NOT SPEAK ENGLISH AND HAS NO CHILDREN. HIS ONLY KNOWN EXPERIENCE IN COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS IS THAT OF HEAD OF A MISSION IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY FROM 1954 TO 1958. HE WAS PROPOSED AS AN ALTERNATE FY 1967 LEADER GRANTEE, BUT DID NOT END UP GOING TO THE UNITED STATES. HE IS STILL RESPECTED AT SCIENCES PO AS AN OCCASIONAL VISITING LECTURER ON PRACTICAL POLITICS.

2. COMMENT: PRIME MINISTER BARRE'S INVITATION TO BROUSSE (TO JOIN THE CABINET) IS DIRECTLY IN KEEPING WITH THE PRESIDENT'S DECLARED AIM OF BROADENING HIS MAJORITY TOWARDS THE CENTER-LEFT (PARIS 25059). BROUSSE FOLLOWED FORMER LEFT RADICAL PRESIDENT HENRI CAILLAVET OUT OF THE PARTY (CAILLAVET LEFT IN SEPTEMBER 1975 AND BROUSSE IN JANUARY 1976). ALREADY IN NOVEMBER 1975 VGE HAD RECEIVED BROUSSE AT THE ELYSEE, AND SOME OBSERVERS ARE HINTING THAT BROUSSE'S ENTRY INTO THE GOVERNMENT WAS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY AS OF THAT DATE. IN FACT, CAILLAVET WAS REPUTEDLY ASKED TO JOIN THE BARRE CABINET AND REFUSED. BOTH BROUSSE AND CAILLAVET NONETHELESS, AS RENEGADES FROM THE LEFT, ARE WHAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD LIKE TO THINK OF AS ONLY THE FIRST SUCCESSES IN HIS ATTEMPTS TO WOO THE MODERATE LEFT. BROUSSE HAS MADE VERY CLEAR HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS EUROPE AND TOWARDS THE COMMERCIAL PLATFORM OF THE COMMON PROGRAM: QUOTE IT APPEARS TO ME JUST AS IMPOSSIBLE TO DEFEND FREE ENTERPRISE WITH THE COLLECTIVISTS AS TO CONSTRUCT EUROPE WITH THOSE OPPOSING SUCH A CONSTRUCTION. END QUOTE. PERSONALLY HE IS WIDELY RESPECTED FOR HAVING THE COURAGE OF HIS CONVICTIONS, FOR HIS UNFAILING LIBERAL APPROACH TO POLITICAL PROBLEMS, AND FOR HIS NO-NONSENSE ROLE IN THE SENATE.
GAMMON

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